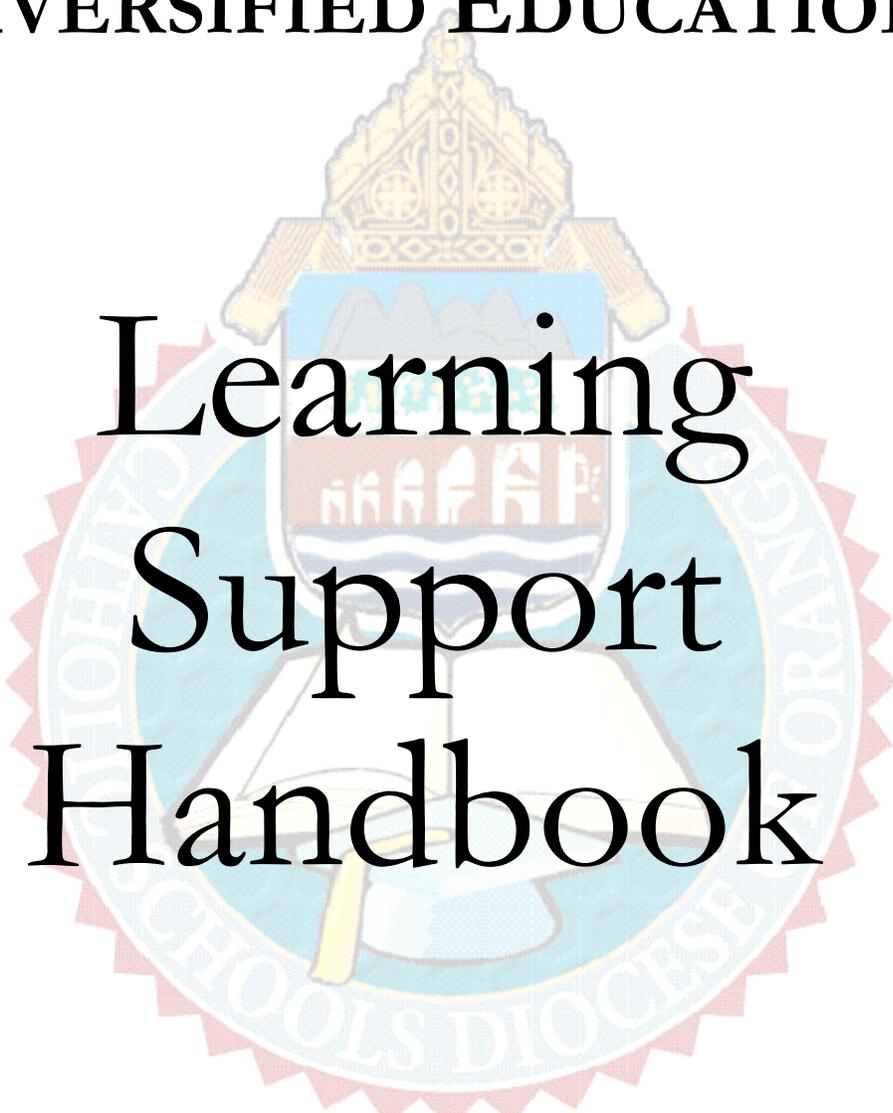


DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION

The seal of the Diocese of Orange Catholic Schools is centered in the background. It features a blue shield with a white cross, a red banner with white text, and a gold crown on top. The shield is set against a circular blue background with a red scalloped border. The text "CATHOLIC SCHOOLS DIOCESE OF ORANGE" is written around the inner edge of the seal.

Learning Support Handbook

DRAFT DOCUMENT

DIOCESE OF ORANGE
OCTOBER 2009

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PREFACE

This Handbook is designed to serve as a resource guide for Catholic educators within the Diocese of Orange for the development of a diversified education program. It was developed to be a work in progress and will be added to as the need arises and additional resources become available. Realizing that each school is unique, processes and forms may be adapted to meet individual site needs while maintaining the integrity of the diocesan philosophy in this area.

The contents support the WCEA/WASC Accreditation Process in aiding a school in implementing its Schoolwide Learning Expectations and developing its Self-Study within its accreditation year. Because the material in the Handbook integrates well with our accreditation process, it should be an integral piece in the school's Self-Study process and future goal setting in supporting the learning needs of all students.

When questions arise regarding the ability of a school to accept or maintain a student within its environment, the information within this handbook should support and yet challenge a school. However, the final decision rests with the individual school in the knowledge of itself, and the student needs presented. This Handbook, along with the Diocesan Administrative Handbook, should aid in the continual definition and implementation of school policies in this area.



A REFLECTION STATEMENT ON INCLUSION PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

April 5, 1999

In their pastoral statement, "To Teach As Jesus Did" (1972), the National Conference of Catholic Bishops states that this document, "Will serve a useful purpose if it provides a catalyst for the efforts to deal realistically with problems of polarization and of confusion now confronting the educational ministry. In the year ahead, American Catholics should continue to articulate and implement their commitment to the educational ministry in ways suited to their times and circumstances." (p.2)

The National Congress on Catholic School for the 21st Century (1991) encouraged all Catholic school educators to open their minds and hearts and doors to an increasingly diverse world. Certainly part of this diversity is made up of children who have been gifted by God with special needs. Since the Bishops promulgated their statement, "To Teach As Jesus Did," Catholic schools have embraced the challenge to develop Programs for children and youth with special learning needs. Most often this was accomplished through resource rooms and pull-out programs. Now, Catholic schools are challenged once again to respond to societal and educational changes. The onset of the philosophy of inclusion has changed the manner in which teachers educate children with special needs.

The Department of Elementary Schools supports the concept of appropriate inclusion. Appropriate inclusion recognizes and affirms the unique learning styles of students with varying exceptionalities. It is within this context that children with special needs are welcomed into the Catholic school community. Catholic elementary schools recognize their responsibility to provide a learning environment that fosters growth and considers the individual needs of the child. To the extent possible, Catholic elementary schools will serve children with special needs in general education classes.

The Department of Elementary Schools recognizes that inclusion is a process. It involves the ability to communicate with a group of learners with diverse needs. Inclusion is not a program or a placement. Inclusion is a philosophy of teaching that relies on the abilities of educators to promote an environment that respects and reverences the rights of all students to learn in regular education classrooms in Catholic Schools.

Inclusion fosters collaboration-general and special education teachers, with parents working together for the common good of all students, especially those with varying exceptionalities. Inclusion implies preparedness. Continuing education and ongoing communication are its hallmarks.

The Department of Elementary Schools recognizes that appropriate inclusion can work effectively for a large number of students with disabilities and learning difficulties while enriching the classroom experience of all students. The Department of Elementary Schools acknowledges that promoting appropriate inclusion without providing the resources needed to make it work effectively for students and teachers, offers a false promise of improved opportunities for students with special needs and assures a strong possibility for disruptions in the learning environment. For inclusion to achieve its full potential in the classroom, a primary requisite is that the entire school community commit themselves to ongoing staff development that will foster a greater understanding and respect for children with special needs.



MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Every student is a child of God, and is deserving of an opportunity for the best Catholic education possible. The overall mission of Catholic education is to teach the gospel and to model Jesus Christ.

Catholic education in the Diocese of Orange exists to support and complement the parents in their responsibility to be the primary educators of their children. Its primary purpose is to assist students, each with a unique learning style and varying exceptionalities, to grow into the fullness of life in Jesus, to be members of the community of believers and to teach the redeeming message of God's love.

It further commits itself to the following goals:

1. To teach all students by acknowledging and responding to the learning styles and needs of each
2. To proactively guide all students to reach their full potential
3. To serve as Christ-like models in spreading the love for each student as a unique gift of God
4. To create the most appropriate activities which will allow all students to have success within their learning environment
5. To provide for ongoing evaluation of each student's progress, thereby enabling each student to have success and challenge in learning

Catholic education within the diocese strives to accept everyone for whom an appropriate program, based upon the above, can be designed and implemented.



TEACHER COMPETENCIES WITHIN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Teachers:

- communicate a strong faith and belief system that all children are a gift from God and can be raised to maximum potential through guidance and teaching,
- accommodate for student needs in achieving prescribed curriculum as well as modifying the existing curriculum to meet the needs of students with exceptional needs on both ends of the learning spectrum,
- problem solve, are able to informally assess the skills a student needs,
- take advantage of children's individual interests and use their internal motivation for developing needed skills,
- set high but possibly alternative expectations that are suitable for an individual student,
- make appropriate expectations for **EACH** student, regardless of the student's capabilities,
- determine how to modify assignments for students; how to differentiate classroom instruction so that all students have a part,
- value all kinds of skills that students bring to a class, not just the academic skills,
- provide daily success for all students,
- know a variety of instructional strategies and how to use them effectively. This includes the ability to adapt materials and rewrite objectives for students to meet the Schoolwide Learning Expectations of the school,
- work as a team with parents, other school personnel and outside professionals, as needed, to determine and provide the best instruction for individual students,
- view each child in the class as an opportunity to become a better teacher,
- demonstrate flexibility and a high tolerance for ambiguity while maintaining vision and expectations for each student.



DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION MODEL FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Catholic schools provide a climate where each child can:

- develop holistically to the best of his/her ability
- develop personal intelligences, learn to capitalize on strengths,
- learn to compensate for weak areas that might limit achievement and aptitude development,
- become an independent learner who assumes responsibility for learning and behavior,
- become intrinsically motivated, and believe he or she can succeed with effort and persistence

To accomplish the above, Catholic schools strive to:

1. develop a climate where each child is seen as having gifts
2. accept each student for whom he/she is as a gift from God
3. find and develop strengths; teach to and assess through them
4. identify weaknesses and keep them from becoming obstacles to achievement/success
5. create a climate that fosters self-efficacy, self-advocacy, and personal intelligence.
6. create a climate that celebrates diversity
7. Adapt curriculum to students; curriculum is the “what” of learning; instruction provides the “how” of learning
8. teach students to adapt themselves to task demands through use of strategies that work for them
9. see learning as a match between learner and environment
10. view intelligence as dynamic, multifaceted, distributed, and contextually determined
11. view aptitude differences as benefiting all within a classroom
12. emphasize the “process” in learning
13. set individual versus competitive goals; define success as learning something you did not know before
14. expect all to succeed and show them how; make academic success possible
15. develop intrinsic motivation by focusing on curiosity, optimal challenge, and control
16. teach for understanding and transfer/application; focus on learning to learn
17. include a program to work collaboratively with parents



WHY ACCOMMODATE AND MODIFY?

1. Accommodations/modifications can lead to student success and improvement in motivation, self-esteem, and behavior.
2. Students cannot be forced to learn and achieve.
3. Learning is being defined differently than in the past.
4. Assessment of student knowledge may not match student achievement.
5. Diversity in student ethnic, cultural, or learning styles requires instructional diversity.
6. Some students included in the general classroom have different needs.
7. It is often the only way some students will benefit from the general classroom instruction.
8. It's a Catholic moral issue.



LEARNING LEVELS FOR DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION

Level 1: No changes to classroom activities

- Students with special needs don't always need something special!

Level 2: Support or Reinforcement

- Extra assistance, same activity and goals
- Examples: monitoring, reminding highlighting, study aids, extra practice, behavior management plans, alternative instructional methods such as small groups, alternative assessments.

Level 3: Modifications or Changes

- Students have same goals
- Alterations to activities or materials
- Examples: altered pace of instruction, adapted class work, adapted tests, alternative assessments

Level 4: Parallel Curriculum

- Basic goals, materials, and assignments may be modified
- Examples: more suitable learning tools (sometimes from other grade levels), high interest/low vocabulary texts, real life activities.

Level 5: Partial Participation

- Students will have different goals
- Will benefit from some parts of classroom activities
- Examples: parts of a lesson as new outcome, different goal for same activity, new teaching paths

Level 6: Alternative Activity

- Different goals and activities
- Should be decided upon only after trying other options
- Student can still be part of the general classroom



POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

POLICY

A Catholic school will accept any child for whom an appropriate program can be designed and implemented following its prescribed enrollment procedures. Each child is to be admitted for admission to and continued enrollment in a diocesan school based upon his/her emotional, academic and physical needs and the resources available to the school in meeting those needs. The final decision in this matter is the local school site.

GUIDELINES

Identifying and Planning for Students with Exceptional Needs: (see “Determining the Ability to Meet a Student’s Need Within an Inclusive Catholic School”)

- Each school needs to have a developed process in place for the identification of incoming and existing students who may have exceptional needs (i.e. Learning Support Team).
- A school may request additional diagnostic information (i.e. psycho-educational assessment) for a student at any time to better develop an appropriate program for that student. An elementary school may initiate **instructional accommodations** and other support services (extra tutoring etc.) without formal assessment. However, if **curricular modifications** are to be made at any grade, it is recommended that psycho-educational assessment precede this. If a student is entering the last two years of the elementary school (beginning of 7th grade) formalized assessment is required.

Entrance Assessment and Acceptance of New Students

- Entrance assessment of students should be utilized for diagnostic purposes only in identifying the learning strengths and needs of a student and in aiding the school in its determination of whether an appropriate program can be developed for a student. Schools should utilize a holistic approach in this assessment through the review of previous documentation, academic screening, parent/student interview and parish affiliation consideration.
- Acceptance of an accommodated student by a diocesan high school is to be determined on an individual basis taking into consideration confidential information provided by the elementary school, previous support/interventions of the elementary school, teacher recommendation and the ability of the high school to meet the student’s needs.

Documentation of Identified Students with Special Needs

- Written documentation incorporating standard diocesan forms is to be maintained on any student identified as needing curricular/instructional modifications or accommodations
- A VISA (Visual Information of Student Assessment), documenting pertinent student information, needs to be developed for a student with specialized needs. This is a valuable resource when transitioning a student from one grade to another.
- An Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) is developed as the outgrowth of a collaborative team process. This documents the accommodations/modifications to be given to and made for the student.

Standardized Testing For Identified Students



- An identified student may qualify for standard and non-standard accommodations on standardized tests administered by the school based upon the guidelines of the standardized testing program. Refer to the testing manual for a listing of standard accommodations. For a pupil to receive a **non-standard** accommodation the following needs to be adhered to:
 - Permission must be granted by the diocesan Office of Faith Formation upon consultation of need and nature of accommodation.
 - A written documented justification for the accommodation (i.e. psycho-educational testing, Individualized Learning Plan etc.) must be on file at the school site.
 - Parents must be aware that accommodation(s) is/are being made for their student and agree to the modified testing situation.
 - Identification that a **non-standard** accommodation was made for a child needs to be marked on the student's permanent school record.
 - Interpretation of the student scores needs to be made in light of the accommodation.
 - Because a non-standard accommodation invalidates the standardized integrity of the assessment given, the test must be scored separately and results must be excluded for the general reporting process.

Assessment/Grading of Student with Special Needs

- Grading practices need to be consistent with the guidelines of the Diocesan Student Learning Assessment system. A student who has been identified as "Level 1" in any subject area must have an accompanying adapted curriculum supplement (such as an Individualized Learning Plan or modification document). For a Level 2 student, the subject curriculum must be above the grade level of the student.

Retention of Identified Student with Special Needs

- An identified student with special needs can be retained only under the following circumstances:
 - It has been determined by the administration, teachers and parents that the student would benefit from another year at that grade level.

8th Grade Diploma

- A student who has received instructional accommodations or curricular modifications within the school can receive an official diocesan diploma. The question to ask is whether the school has been able to enhance the holistic growth of a student to the best of its ability and whether the student has responded to that growth to the best of his/her ability.

Alternative Educational Placement

- If it has been determined by the administration, in consultation with the Learning Support Team, that the school cannot continue to meet a child's needs at the school, an alternative educational placement may be recommended. This is done only after every possible school and outside intervention and support resource have been exhausted without success.

Learning Support Coordinator

- It is expected that each school has an identified Learning Support Coordinator whose role is to assist teachers and students and to facilitate the functioning of a Learning Support



Team. The role may include working with small groups and assessing individual students. However, the main function is to enable success of each student within the regular classroom situation.

Learning Support Team

- It is recommended that each school develop a team approach in reviewing students and their needs. The team should be composed of an administrator, Learning Support Coordinator, teachers as needed, and appropriate school support staff (i.e. counselor) as well as outside personnel (as needed). The team should meet on a regular basis for the purpose of identification of special needs, dialogue and follow-up of students.

Diocesan Student Learning Assessment

- The philosophy and processes of Diversified Education should coordinate with and enhance the Diocesan Student Learning Assessment System in the evaluation and reporting of progress of a student.

Storage of Confidential Records

- Confidential student information (i.e. psycho-education assessment, Individual Learning Plans, VISA's etc.) is to be kept in a file separate from the regular cum file information. An identification marking (such as a colored dot) on the cum file identifies that a confidential file exists.



DETERMINING THE ABILITY TO MEET A STUDENT'S NEED WITHIN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

It is the desire of each Catholic school to provide the best education for a child possible. When determining this, the school must look at a prospective student and analyze its educational program by determining the following:

1. ***What are the strengths and needs of a prospective student?***

Review:

- i. Previous report cards
- ii. Entrance assessment
- iii. Previous psycho-educational assessment

2. ***Why do the parents wish the child to attend this school?***

Determine:

- i. What expectations do the parents have?
- ii. Are the parents' expectations realistic?
- iii. Does the school feel it can meet the expectations?

3. ***Can the student him/herself commit to the school?***

4. ***What support does the school have in place to accommodate the student?***

5. ***What extra support do the parents need to provide to ensure the success of the student? Are they able to provide?***

6. ***Can the classroom teacher accommodate for the student's needs and/or modify curriculum in some instances, if needed? What is the policy of the school in relation to curricular modifications?***

7. ***How will the student be assessed to measure academic growth and achievement?***

Once a student is accepted into a school, ongoing assessment and dialogue with the parents is imperative to monitor learning expectations and the continuing ability of the school to meet the student's needs.



DEFINITIONS MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS¹

Modifications

Modifications are changes in **what** a student is expected to learn. Modifications refer to changes made to **curriculum expectations** in order to meet the needs of the student. Modifications are made when the grade level expectations are beyond or below the student's level of ability. The changes are made to provide a student opportunity to participate meaningfully and productively, along with other students, in classroom and school learning experiences. Modifications include changes in instructional level, content, and performance criteria.

Accommodations

Accommodations are changes in **how** a student learns. Accommodations are services or supports used to enable a student to fully access the subject matter and instruction. An accommodation **does not alter the content or expectations**; instead it is an adjustment to instructional methods. Examples include books on tape, content enhancements, and additional time on tests. When using accommodations, students are expected to meet the grade level standards set for all students. (Academic, behavioral, emotional, social and physical)

Accommodations are generally grouped into the following categories:

- ♦ **Presentation** (example: repeat directions, read aloud, use larger bubbles, etc.)
- ♦ **Response** (example: mark answers in book, use reference aids, point, use computer, etc.)
- ♦ **Setting** (example: study carrel, special lighting, separate room, etc.)
- ♦ **Timing/Scheduling** (example: extended time, frequent breaks, etc.)

¹ Reference information from:

www.peatc.org/peakaccom.htm

<http://www.oklahomaparentscenter.org>

<http://www.advocacyinstitute.org/resources> (MakingNCLBwork.pdf)

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/2306>

<http://specialed.about.com/cs/teacherstrategies/a/terminology.htm>



Learning Adaptations / Interventions

Note: Many identified below could be considered as either an accommodation or modification depending upon the expectation of the curriculum. They could also be applied to whole class learning.

- ♦ Provide preferential seating, e. g., seated near the front of the room and away from distractions if such a location helps him maintain better focus.
- ♦ Stand near him when giving instructions.
- ♦ Have the daily routine in writing where it is easy to see.
- ♦ Include opportunities for physical activity in the schedule.

Instruction

- ♦ Provide a written outline of material covered.
- ♦ Use overhead and other visual media with oral instruction.
- ♦ Incorporate technology, e. g., computers, calculators, videos.
- ♦ Accept typed or word-processed assignments.
- ♦ Allow oral or audio taped assignments.
- ♦ Individualize assignments e. g., length, number, due date, topic.
- ♦ Use peer tutoring.
- ♦ Teach specific study skills, e. g., organization, note taking.
- ♦ Important words and phrases highlighted.
- ♦ Alternative books or materials on the same theme or topic

Assessment

- ♦ Provide practice questions for study.
- ♦ Give open book tests
- ♦ Allow one page of notes to be used during testing
- ♦ Vary the format of test.
- ♦ Read questions aloud.
- ♦ Allow student to respond to questions orally.
- ♦ Allow use of technology, e. g., calculator, word processor.
- ♦ Provide extra time to complete test.
- ♦ Give parts of test in more than one sitting.
- ♦ Allow opportunity to take test in another room or at another time of day.
- ♦ Allow student to re-take test
- ♦ Give more frequent short quizzes and fewer long tests.
- ♦ An outline in place of an essay for a major project
- ♦ Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) choices on tests
- ♦ Spelling support from a computerized spell check program
- ♦ Word bank of choices for answers to test questions
- ♦ Use of a calculator on a math test
- ♦ Film or video supplements in place of text
- ♦ Questions re-worded using simpler language
- ♦ Projects substituted for written reports

Grades

- ♦ Mark correct answers rather than mistakes
- ♦ Base grades on modified standards e.g., IEP Objectives, effort, amount of improvement, content rather than spelling.



- ♦ Specify the skills he has mastered rather than give a letter grade

Homework

- ♦ Limit homework to a certain amount of time spent productively, rather than an amount of work to be completed.
- ♦ Give modified assignments.
- ♦ Allow extra credit assignments.
- ♦ Allow him to work on homework at school.
- ♦ Provide written explanation of homework assignments.
- ♦ Select a “study buddy” who can copy assignments or clarify by phone.
- ♦ Give reminders about due dates for long-term assignments.
- ♦ Develop reward system for work completed and turned in.

Home-School Communication

- ♦ Develop a daily or weekly home-school communication system, e. g., notes, check list, voice mail, or email.
- ♦ Mail assignment sheets directly to home
- ♦ Hold periodic student-teacher meetings.
- ♦ Schedule regular parent-teacher meetings.





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION FORMS

The Inclusion Forms presented in this section include forms that are designated as standard, which are intended to be used by all schools (with necessary school modifications), and a selection of forms that can be adapted for your school. The standard forms are a framework covering the needs for all schools and are to be used in conjunction with other forms (both optional and those developed at local school site).

Standard Forms include the following:

- Teacher Referral Form
 - General form to be used in initial referral to the Learning Support Team.
- Diversified Education Check List
 - Form to be used as the cover to a folder for a designated student and utilized by the school site Learning Support Coordinator and Learning Support Team. This checklist gives a visual guide as to what information has been obtained and what is still needed for a student.
- VISA (Visual Information of Student Assessment)
 - Cover Sheet and Guidelines – Gives guidelines for input requested on a student
 - VISA Form – Gives an overall view of the individual student including suggested adaptations/modifications developed from input brought to the Learning Support Team Meeting. This form is utilized when transitioning a student from one grade to another.
- Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)
 - Form that gives a synopsis of the specific accommodations, modifications and supports for the student to allow more efficient functioning within a classroom situation. This is ideally developed within an Learning Support Team Meeting.
- Individualized Learning Plan Progress Report
 - An overview of the status of progress of the student based on the modifications and supports of the Individualized Plan.
- Authorization for Release of Information
 - This form allows a school to receive confidential information from an outside professional (i.e. psycho-educational assessment). This must be completed before information is shared.
- Assessment/Intervention Parent Permission Form



- When a specific service is offered to a student at the school site (i.e. individual assessment), this desire must be communicated to the parent and written parent permission is necessary.





DIOCESE OF ORANGE
TEACHER REFERRAL FORM

Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Date of Parent Contact: _____ Parent Response: _____

Teacher summary of student strengths: **

Teacher summary of concerns: **

Mark each below as applies:

HEALTH ISSUES

Vision
Hearing
Motor Skills
Overall Development
Medication (list): **
Other: **

SOCIAL ISSUES

Social isolation
Boundaries (e.g., invades personal space)
“Bullying” / Verbal intimidation
Physical altercations (pushing, hitting, etc.)
Disrespectful and/or defiant with adults
Friendship problems (e.g., sharing, taking turns)
Other: **

EMOTIONAL ISSUES

Withdrawn / Sad
Anxious
Emotionally over-reactive
Easily frustrated
Easily angered
Other: **
Contributing factors (e.g., divorce, death, illness of family member, etc.): **

BEHAVIORAL ISSUES

Inattentive / Off task
Problems completing work
Unable to follow directions/instructions
Difficulty with multi-step procedures
High activity level
Impulsivity



Difficulty following rules
Problems remaining quiet in class
Disruptive to peers/teacher
Other: **

ACADEMIC ISSUES

Reading readiness
Reading decoding
Reading fluency
Reading comprehension
Other Reading concerns: **
Math readiness
Math computation skills
Problem solving/Word problems
Other Math concerns: **
Writing readiness
Penmanship
Spelling
Grammar / Sentence structure
Vocabulary
Poor organization of ideas / Sequencing
Fine motor skill problems
Other writing concerns: **
Fluency of oral expression
Speech articulation / Impediment
Difficulty expressing ideas
Improper use of grammar
Other expressive language weakness: **
Difficulty understanding oral information
Other receptive language weakness: **

OTHER ISSUES

Self help skills
Memory skills
Organizational skills
Study skills
Test taking skills
Listening skills
Overall processing speed
Other: **

Additional/Information or concerns: **

Strategies attempted by teacher (e.g., classroom incentive system, school/home note, relocating desk, curricular adaptations, one-on-one help with teacher or assistant): *

Requested action: (check all that apply)

Classroom observation
Student Support Coordinator consultation
Administrator intervention (e.g., discipline issues/problems)
Screening for additional academic support
Other: **

Note to teacher: After completing this referral form, please forward to the appropriate Administrator or Student Support Coordinator.

Student Support Coordinator Signature **Date**

Administrator Signature **Date**





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

DIVERSIFIED EDUCATION CHECKLIST

Student's Name:

Date of Birth

Age:

Sex: M F

Address

Phone

Referring Teacher

Grade:

Parents:

Resides With

Date Requested Form

Date Returned Form

<input type="text"/>	Referral from teacher	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Release forms from parent	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	Records	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visual	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	ILP	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>	Observation	<input type="text"/>

Learning Support Team Meeting (ITM)

Date:

Meeting Notes:

Date:

Team Referral Form

Parent Preparation Sheet

Parent Preparation Sheet

Student Preparation Sheet

Follow-up Meeting #1:

Date

Follow-up Meeting #2

Date:

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Date Developed:

Documentation (Outside Assessment)

Student VISA (Visual Information of Student Assessment)





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

VISA (VISUAL INFORMATION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT)

COMPLETION COVER SHEET AND GUIDELINES

To: _____ Date _____

Please return the attached documents to _____
Name

by _____

Learning support programs for diversified needs students are built on adaptations for individual needs within the regular classroom. In order to make the necessary accommodations, new receiving teachers and staff need to be provided with instructionally relevant student information that will create a “picture” or profile of each student as a classroom learner.

The VISA. Document is intended to provide observable instructional information on students to teachers who make a request. This information helps prepare curricular, instructional, and/or behavioral adaptations.

Your input is requested on the following students, with whom you have or have had instructional contact. Please read each item and provide as much information as you can. Feel free to add comments where appropriate. If information already appears on the form, please add your name to the line “completed by...” and add your observations.

Please read and observe the following completion guidelines:

- Do not use any “official” test data. All information should be observable and made with professional judgment.
- For independent functioning levels, you can estimate grade levels or use more general terms such as on grade level, below peer group, acceptable, and so forth.
- If you feel the information is not pertinent, don’t complete that item.
- This information will be shared with other staff members who are or will be involved with student’s education. The information may be shared with parents and the students themselves.
- Above all, present all material in a positive manner. Teachers need to know what a student can do, along with the student’s needs, presented in a manner that promotes positive problem solving.





**DIOCESE OF ORANGE
(ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)**

Student: _____

Grade: _____

**VISA
CONFIDENTIAL**

Are of Exceptionality: _____
Name Date

This form completed by: _____ on _____

List approximate (independent) FUNCTIONING grade level:

Reading: _____ Written Language: _____ Social: _____
Spelling: _____ Math: _____ Behavioral _____

List any physical limitations that require any classroom adaptations/modifications:

- vision _____
- hearing _____
- motor _____
- health _____
- other _____

Check the student's preferred LEARNING STYLES:

- visual auditory
- tactile (manipulation by hand) kinesthetic (whole body movement)

Check any statements that apply to the student's work habits in the regular classroom:

(make additional comments)

- Works independently
- Distracted by sounds, talking etc.
- Should be seated: in front of room in back of room away from a window
 - near a window near friends away from friends
 - near teacher away from teacher
- Is motivated to work
- Initiates tasks or begins directions easily
- Does homework
- Gives up easily
- Usually completes tasks started
- Is usually on time to class
- Usually brings materials to class
- Usually remembers assignments, homework instructions, etc.
- Needs to help with organization
- Works best with a structured classroom routine
- Best instructional environment working with peers working with other student



Other comments or suggestions:





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

Date:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

_____ (name of student) is being accepted conditionally to
_____ (school) for a probationary period of
_____ (amount of time). We wish for a successful learning experience for your child and
therefore seek a positive working relationship in meeting his/her needs. The following are
understood:

Responsibilities of School:

Responsibilities of parents:

Special needs that may not be able to be met by the school:

Principal

Date



Parents:

Date





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLAN

Academic Plan Academic and Behavioral Plan Behavioral Plan

Student: _____ ILP Date: _____
Homeroom Teacher: _____ *1st Update: _____
Grade / Section: _____ **2nd Update: _____

Above Grade Level Subjects: _____
 At Grade Level Subjects: _____
 Below Grade Level Subjects: _____

Student Strengths: **

Student Areas of Development: **

Key goals/objectives for this school year include (*specific and measurable*):

- 1. **
- 2. **
- 3. **

Instructional Adaptations

Classroom Environments		<input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate book pages so student does not have to copy
<input type="checkbox"/> Preferential seating		<input type="checkbox"/> Multiple learning modes, visual, kinesthetic, auditory
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of study carrel		<input type="checkbox"/> Use concrete materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure transition times		<input type="checkbox"/> Other: **
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce distractions		Assignments
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: **		<input type="checkbox"/> Shorten
Lesson Presentation		<input type="checkbox"/> Simplify
<input type="checkbox"/> Write key points on board		<input type="checkbox"/> Extend time
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide written outline/handouts		<input type="checkbox"/> Oral reports/project vs. written
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide visual aids		<input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to record or type
<input type="checkbox"/> Have child review key points orally		<input type="checkbox"/> Don't penalize for spelling errors/sloppy papers
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure directions are understood		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher signs assignment notebook
<input type="checkbox"/> Use peer tutoring		<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce reading level
<input type="checkbox"/> Use eye contact/teacher proximity		<input type="checkbox"/> Keep extra set of books at home
<input type="checkbox"/> Break down tasks into small steps		<input type="checkbox"/> Highlight materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading assignments on tape when possible		<input type="checkbox"/> Reading materials on tape/CD when possible
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of calculator		<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended for after-school tutoring support
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other: **



Test Taking

- Allow open book exams
- Give exam orally
- Allow extra time
- Read test on tape
- Short answers
- Multiple Choice

- True/False
- Modify length
- Test in short units
- Qualifies for ITBS Accommodations
- Other: **

Behavioral Support

- Clarification of rules
- Expectations and consequences consistently maintained
- Frequent breaks
- Positive reinforcement
- Offer choices
- Immediate feedback
- Visual daily schedule
- Check desk/notebook organization
- Ignore inappropriate behaviors
- Break multi-step instructions down into smaller units
- Break projects/tasks down into smaller units
- Use orienting procedures prior to beginning instruction (e.g., eye contact, verbal prompt, touch, etc.)
- Check for understanding
- Teach organizational skills
- Use daily/weekly home/school note
- Use classroom incentive system to shape appropriate behavior
- Use individualized incentive system to shape appropriate behavior
- Teach social skills (e.g. via direct instruction and/or role-playing)
- Provide small group or one-on-one assistance to improve self-regulation and/or attentional skills (e.g., classroom aide, peer tutor, counseling, etc.)
- Other: **

{Note: Indicated adaptations will be implemented as needed at the discretion of the teacher.}

Additional Support Not Listed Above:

- Language Arts: _____
- Math: _____
- Religion: _____
- Social Studies: _____
- Science: _____
- Electives: _____

Student's Grades (as of the date of the ILP):

- Language Arts: _____
- Math: _____
- Religion: _____
- Social Studies: _____
- Science: _____
- Electives: _____

Low Grades due to (check all that apply):

- Missing/Incomplete Assignments
- Late Assignments
- Low test scores



- Academic Probation (*attach form to ILP*)
- Other: **

Psycho-Educational or other testing:

(Please be aware that qualifying diagnostic information is necessary to support curricular modifications)

- Testing is recommended (***School to provide referral list and information regarding public school testing process***)
- Testing is in process with: **
- Testing has been completed but results have not been released
- Testing has been completed and results are available for review
- Testing is not needed at this time

Additional Information:

**

Follow-up to the Individualized Learning Plan -

School Support:

**

Parental Support:

**

We are in complete agreement with this Individualized Learning Plan dated: _____

Parent email address: _____

By providing your email address on this document you have authorized the school to send the final copy of this document to you electronically.

Student Signature (if applicable)	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Parent Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Parent Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Student Support Coordinator Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Assistant Principal Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial
_____	_____	_____	_____
Principal Signature	Date	*1st Update/Initial	**2nd Update/Initial



Comments:

StudentSupport ILP Form_DataInput (Revised: March 2009)





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Student:

Date:

Teacher:

Grade:

Academic Progress: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Study Progress: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Behavior: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Attention: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Organization: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Social Interaction: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:

Emotional Status: Improved Improving No Improvement

Comments:



Additional Comments or Observations:



(School)
STRATEGIES ATTEMPTED BY TEACHER CHECKLIST

Student:	Grade
Teacher:	Date
Please return to:	By:

Check the adjustments you have made in your classroom setting. Indicate frequency (hourly, multiple times/day, daily, weekly).

Possible Adjustments/Settings	Frequency	Comments:
Classroom Environment;		
Preferential seating		
Reduce distractions		
Structure transition times		
Use of a study carrel		
Other:		
Lesson Presentation		
Break down tasks into smaller steps		
Opportunity for oral review		
Make sure directions are understood		
Provide visual aids		
Using different learning modes – visual, auditory, kinesthetic		
Use of teacher proximity/eye contact		
Use peer tutoring		
Other:		
Assignments:		
Extend time		
Highlight materials/key points		
Shorten assignment		
Simplify assignment		
Other:		
Behavioral Support:		
Help with organization/daily planner		
Clarification of rules		
Frequent breaks		
Immediate feedback/positive reinforcement		
Daily schedule/visual aid		
Positive reinforcement		
Direct teaching of social skills/role-playing		
Offer choices		
Other:		
Test Taking		
Allow extra time		



Give test orally		
Give test in shorter units		
Other		
Possible Adjustments/Settings	Frequency	Comments
Math		
Use of computation chart (add/sub/mul)		
Calculator use		
Graph Paper		
Visual Aids:		
➤ Color code problem operations		
➤ Index card w/window		
➤ Fold paper in ½ or ¼		
➤ Represent problem pictorially		
Teach student to verbalize steps		
Use of manipulatives to problem solve		
Reading		
Activate prior knowledge using organizers		
Use who, what, when, where sentences, questions, prompts to help comprehension		
Oral pre-reading activities (Look at the pictures, headings, bold print, sub topics)		
Establish purpose for reading that matches the student's comprehension level		
Explicitly teach word attack skills.		
Pre-teach vocabulary and content area		
Provide reading materials at ability level		
Read to student (or use tapes/CD's)		
Use copies of text pages for highlighting		
Writing/Language Arts		
Allow use of spelling dictionary/spell check		
Allow dictation of writing assignment (to transcribe later)		
Allow time for all stages of writing process		
Teach student how to use story maps/word webs/concept diagrams/maps		
Provide list of key vocabulary words		
Allow student to type		
Social Studies/Science/Add'l Subject		
Pre-read lesson with key questions		
Connect key concepts with prior knowledge (compare/contrast)		
Draw a picture of what was learned		
Provide lesson outline/what to know		
Use of alternative assessments		
Provide content material @ reading level		



DATE of STRATEGY	Classroom Environment	Daily Lessons/ Instruction	Assignments/ Homework	Behavior Support	Assessments/ Evaluations	Additional Supports	RESULTS/Affect + / -

Log of Parent Communications:

Date: _____ **Method: (circle) Meeting Note Phone Other** _____ **Topic:** _____

Comments: _____

Date: _____ **Method: (circle) Meeting Note Phone Other** _____ **Topic:** _____

Comments: _____

Date: _____ **Method: (circle) Meeting Note Phone Other** _____ **Topic:** _____

Comments: _____

Date: _____ **Method: (circle) Meeting Note Phone Other** _____ **Topic:** _____

Comments: _____



DIOCESE OF ORANGE
(Elementary School)
OBSERVATION FORM

(SAMPLE)

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Referring Teacher _____ Date _____

Reason for Referral: _____

Time of Day: _____ Day of Week _____

Class/Subject _____

Seat Location within classroom _____

BEHAVIORS

WORK HABITS





DIOCESE OF ORANGE
(Elementary School)
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM
(SAMPLE)

Student: _____

Observed by: _____

Date of Observation: _____ Length of Observation: _____

Class Observed _____ Teacher: _____

Performance Parameters _____ Comments _____

A. Purpose of Task

a. Objective of Lesson _____

B. Nature of Activity

a. Individual, Grouped, or Paired? _____

b. Component Areas (motor, perceptual language, social/emotional, cognitive, self-help)? _____

c. Listening, watching, doing? _____

C. Accuracy of Performance

a. Which parts of task can student do?

b. Which parts are difficult?

c. Does student compensate? How? _____

D. Attention to Activity

a. Length of attention to task? _____

b. Distracted? By what stimuli or event? _____



- c. Can refocus attention if interrupted?

TASK – INDIVIDUAL

A. When assigned task, the student:

- a. Initiates task without need for teacher’s verbal encouragement _____
- b. Requests help in order to start task _____
- c. Complains before getting started on a task _____
- d. Demands help in order to start on a task _____
- e. Actively refuses to do task despite teacher’s encouragement _____
- f. Passively retreats from task despite teacher’s encouragement _____

B. While working on task, the student:

- a. Works independently _____
- b. Performs assigned task without complaint _____
- c. Needs teacher’s verbal encouragement to keep working _____
- d. Needs teacher in close proximity to keep working _____
- e. Needs physical contact from teacher to keep working _____
- f. Seeks constant reassurance to keep working _____
- g. Is reluctant to have work inspected _____
- h. Belittles own work _____

C. At the end of assigned time, the student:

- a. Completes task _____
- b. Takes pride in completed task _____
- c. Goes on to next task _____
- d. Refuses to complete task _____

D. Social Interaction

- a. Establishes a relationship to one of two peers _____
- b. Shares materials with peers _____



- c. Respects property of peers _____
- d. Gives help to peers when needed _____
- e. Accepts help from peers when needed _____
- f. Establishes a relationship with most peers _____
- g. Teases or ridicules peers _____
- h. Physically provokes peers _____
- i. Participates appropriately in group activities _____
- j. Postpones own needs for group objectives _____
- k. Withdraws from group _____
- l. Overly assertive in group _____
- m. Disrupts group activities (calling out, provocative language) _____

E. Relationship to Teacher:

- a. Tries to meet teacher's expectations _____
- b. Functions adequately without constant teacher encouragement _____
- c. Interacts with teacher in non-demanding manner _____
- d. Tests limits, tries to see how much teacher will allow _____
- e. Seeks special treatment from teacher _____
- f. Responds to teacher's criticism appropriately _____
- g. Defies teacher's requirements _____
- h. Responds with anger when demands are thwarted by teacher _____
- i. Abuses teacher verbally _____
- j. Requires close and constant supervision because behavioral controls are so limited _____

Comments:



TEACHER/PARENT CONTACT RECORD

Name of Student:

Parent/Guardian Contacted:

Date Contacted:

How contacted:

Summary notes of discussion with Parent/Guardian

Information relevant to the problem:

Any additional information shared:

Possible implications on the student's educational program:

Suggestions and/or recommendations by parent/guardian:

Teacher

Grade

Follow-up:



CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

A Learning Support Team in a Catholic School is an on-site review committee with the following purposes:

- To support the school at large in the identification of students with exceptional needs.
- To create a forum in which teachers can discuss challenges they or their students are experiencing which interrupt the learning process.
- To assist teachers in developing interventions and strategies to enhance the learning process.
- To support parents at meetings with recommendations for interventions, screenings, evaluations, and placement.

Composition: The Learning Support Team can consist of the following members, depending on the school's needs:

Principal of the school

Teachers (classroom, learning center)

Related service staff (Learning Support Coordinator, psychologist, counseling, etc)

Appropriate professionals (school based and community based)

Step 1: Formation of a Learning Support Team (LST)

- Team will include members of the administration, classroom teachers, the Support Coordinator (SC), and support staff (psychologists, reading specialists etc.).
- Determine a meeting schedule appropriate to the needs of the school site.
- Review/modify forms to meet school site needs.
- Present the referral process information to the faculty at a faculty meeting.

Step 2: Referral Process

- Teacher begins a student portfolio, which includes on-going observations, interventions, work samples, and parent contact information.
- Teacher fills out the Teacher Referral Form and Intervention Checklist and gives it to the SC.
- Student is scheduled to be presented at the next LST meeting.
- Principal is notified regarding the students to be presented at the next LST meeting.



Step 3: Learning Support Team (LST) Meeting

- LST meeting # 1: Initial LST meetings are conducted without the parents or student present in order to discuss the students' strengths, areas of concern, and possible interventions and strategies.
- LST meeting # 2: Follow-up meetings may include discussion of previously presented students and strategies.

Step 4: Assessments and ILP's

- If deemed appropriate by the SC and /or the LST, a member of the LST will conduct informal assessments and/or observations.



Note:

1. Before any assessments or observations can be conducted, a Parent Permission Form must be completed. This permission form should be presented to the parent at a conference that is attended by the SC, classroom teacher, and possibly a member of the administration.
 2. This meeting should be documented in writing. Results of this meeting should be included in the documentation.
 3. Documentation should be forwarded to the principal at this point.
- When determined to be necessary by the LST, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will be instituted for the student. The ILP may be based upon official documentation or informal assessments and/or observations. This provides a synopsis of specific accommodations, modifications, and supports intended to allow the student to function more effectively within the school environment. The ILP is ideally developed in the LST meeting. The ILP can also be developed by the SC.

Note: If a student is in sixth grade or above, formal assessment is necessary for an ILP to be initiated or continued.

- The ILP is shared with parents at a conference attended by the classroom teacher, the SC, and/or a member of the LST.
- The SC, LST, and the classroom teacher monitor progress and effectiveness of the ILP.

Step 5: Referral to Outside Source

- If school resources have proven ineffective, the LST and parents consider referral to an outside source for screenings and/or evaluations.
- The parent makes the referral request in writing to a private agency qualified to provide these services, or to the student's district of location, that is the district in which the student's current school is located (See model Parent Letter).
- The SC aids the school district or private agency and parents in following up the evaluation request.
- At the ISP/IEP meeting, where results of the evaluation are presented and discussed, one or more members of the LST should be present.



8. Any additional information you could share with the team that will assist us in formulating a successful plan for your child.





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM MEETING SUMMARY

Student: Birth date Age Grade

Referring Person: ITM Follow-up Date

HISTORY:	MEDICAL/HEALTH:
STRENGTHS: Parents: Teachers: Student: Other:	CURRENT MODIFICATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS



<p>CONCERNS:</p>	<p>PROPOSED ACCOMMODATIONS/ ACTIONS:</p> <p>Teachers:</p> <p>Environment:</p> <p>Assignments:</p> <p>Materials:</p> <p>Teaching Techniques:</p> <p>Student:</p> <p>Parent:</p>

Signatures of persons Attending ITM

Signature / Date **Signature / Date**

Signature / Date **Signature / Date**



Signature / Date

Date
Signature / Date





DIOCESE OF ORANGE

STUDENT PREPARATION SHEET FOR A LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM MEETING

Student:

Grade

My favorite activity at school is _____

I am really good at _____

I learn best when _____

Something I would like to change about my school is _____

What I like best about home is _____

What I would change about home is _____

Some things that I am concerned about are _____

The person I like to talk to the most at home is _____

The person I like to talk the least to at home is _____

If I could change one thing at school it would be _____

Draw a picture of your family or class



**SEE REQUEST FOR RECORDS, MATERIALS, AND INFORMATION LISTED ON
REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM.
Authorization to Exchange Information, Page 2**

Please send requested records, materials, and/or information to:

(Name of Current School)

(Name of Current Administrator)

(Address of Current School)

(Current School FAX number)

(Current School telephone number)

Please send the following educational, medical, psychological, or other records, materials, or information regarding _____ :
(student's name)



For office use only:

Date Authorization sent _____

Date requested information received _____



REQUEST LETTER

School Letterhead

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

School District of Location: _____

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the parent of _____, born on _____.

At the present time I have concerns regarding my child's academic achievement. This has been documented through observations, assessments and interventions performed at my child's school, _____, in the city of _____.

You have my permission to contact _____ School to request copies of this documentation or acquire any additional information you need.

I am requesting district assistance in this matter. Based on the information provided this would entail either a student study team, response to intervention, or beginning of an assessment process.

Please feel free to contact me or _____ School if you have any further questions. Thank you for your timely assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



CLINICAL GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION OF LEARNING DISABILITIES, AD/HD AND PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Preface

These materials were adapted from a document developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), the Educational Testing Services (ETS), and a Learning Specialist within the Diocese of Orange. These guidelines can be viewed in their entirety on www.ets.org. The primary intent of these documents was to develop a uniform and standard criteria for documenting the above stated disabilities that could be used by personnel and consumers requiring clinical documentation to determine appropriate accommodations for individuals with learning, attention, or psychiatric disabilities. This document will provide individuals, schools, professional diagnosticians, and service providers with a common understanding of the clinical documentation necessary to validate these disabilities and the need for reasonable accommodations.

Please Note:

The following refers to documentation that is most commonly utilized by public education, clinical psychologists/psychometricians and medical professionals. They form the basis of commonly understood guidelines within the public community. Though they may not be utilized strictly in determining instructional accommodations and curricular modifications within Catholic schools, they are a valuable resource to elementary and secondary schools in diagnosis.



DOCUMENTATION OF A LEARNING DISABILITY

These guidelines are in conjunction with Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Documentation Requirements

I) **Testing Must Be Current**

Psychoeducational testing must have been completed within the last **three years**, as the severity of the LD may change over time and the current impact of the individual's disabilities on his or her academic performance needs to be assessed. Testing must be renewed every three years in order to continue receiving accommodations.

II) **A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation**

Psychoeducational testing must be administered by a licensed clinician who specializes in psychoeducational/neuropsychological testing. A clinical/educational/school psychologist, neuropsychologist, learning disabilities specialist (Master's level), and medical doctors with training and experience in the assessment of learning problems in adolescents are acceptable. License number must be included on the testing report. Comprehensive training and relevant experience with an LD population is essential.

III) **Documentation Necessary to Substantiate the LD Must be Comprehensive**

Minimally, the following tests must be included in the assessment. Testing reports must include standard scores and percentiles. Achievement tests must also include grade equivalents. If English is not the primary language of the student being tested, and the student has difficulty understanding, writing, or speaking English, appropriate tests may be substituted. An IEP or 504 plan is insufficient documentation of a LD, but can be included as part of a more comprehensive battery.

Please note: The CA Public School System employs the **Discrepancy Model**, which may be used by the Diocese of Orange junior high and high schools. In this model, there must be a 22.5 point difference, or 2 ½ standard deviation difference, between the Overall IQ score (e.g. Full Scale IQ) and achievement standard scores in order to qualify for LD accommodations.

A. Aptitude/ Cognitive Ability Tests:

- ◆ Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale- Revised (WAIS-R)/ Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III (WISC-III)
- ◆ Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised:Tests of Cognitive Ability,
- ◆ Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale (4th ed.)

B. Academic Achievement Tests:

- ◆ Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)



- ◆ Stanford Test of Academic Skills
- ◆ Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Tests of Achievement

Please note: the Wide Range Achievement Test- 3 (**WRAT- 3**) is **not** a comprehensive measure of achievement

- C. Visual/Auditory/Information Processing
 Visual and Auditory Processing Disorders may **not** be diagnosed through only a discrepancy between visual and auditory subtest scores (e.g. a significant discrepancy between Verbal and Performance IQ on the WISC-III). However, this may be used as part of a larger battery of tests in diagnosing these disorders. The following tests and specialists may be utilized.

IV) Diagnostic Interview

Please include:

- A. A **referral question** and description/history of presenting problem.
- B. Summary of any remarkable **neonatal/birth history** (i.e. traumatic birth, emergency C-section, exposure to drugs/alcohol/toxins, anoxia/apoxia, low APGAR scores, remarkable milestones/developmental history).
- C. Summary of relevant **medical history** (i.e. any history of seizures, brain trauma, repeated ear infections/ high fevers, serious illnesses, etc.)
- D. Summary of **psychiatric history** (i.e. psychiatric hospitalizations, family psychiatric history, therapy, traumatic events, sleeping/eating disorders, explosive behavior, etc.)
- E. Summary of relevant **medication history** (i.e. medication taken for AD/HD, depression, mood stabilization, anxiety, etc.). *Please note whether student was tested while on or off medication.*
- F. Review of **academic/ learning disability history** (i.e. other family members with learning disabilities, problems in school, specific subjects student has had difficulty in, etc.) and **accommodations** student has received in the past.
- G. Brief review of **previous testing** (i.e. when it was conducted, tests administered, relevant scores, remarkable changes in test scores, etc.)
- H. A **DSM-IV Diagnosis** on all 5 Axis'.
- I. State **specific classroom accommodations** student would benefit from, accompanied by a rationale of why they are needed.
- J. **Optional Tests**
 The following tests are **optional**, and helpful to the Diocese in developing accommodations for the student, and also in ruling out other disabilities:



- ◆ Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank (please remark on sentences that indicate depression, anxiety, anger, etc.).
- ◆ Children’s/ Adult Depression Inventory (if depression is noted). Please remark on items marked by the student that indicate serious depression.
- ◆ Kinetic Family Drawing and/or House-Tree-Person (please include copy of drawing(s) with report).
- ◆ Rorschach Inkblot Test (Comprehensive Scoring System/RIAP)

K. Other Assessment Measures

Other formal assessment measures may be integrated with the above instruments to help rule in/ out the LD and/or to differentiate it from coexisting disorders (i.e. to establish a differential diagnosis). For example:

- ◆ Nelson-Denny Reading Skills Test
- ◆ Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test
- ◆ Test of Written Language- 3 (TOWL-3)
- ◆ Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – Revised
- ◆ Classroom Observation

V) Documentation Must Include a Specific Diagnosis

Nonspecific diagnoses such as individual “learning styles,” “learning differences,” “academic problems,” “slow reader,” and “test anxiety,” do not in and of themselves constitute a LD diagnosis. It is important to rule out alternative explanations for problems in learning, such as emotional, attentional, or motivational problems, that may be interfering with learning but do not constitute a LD. The diagnostician is encouraged to use direct language in the diagnosis and documentation of a LD, avoiding use of such terms as “suggests” or “is indicative of” (Educational Testing Services, 2000). **The diagnosis must be in concurrence with DSM-IV guidelines.**

VI) An interpretative summary must be provided

A diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the report. Please include a clinical summary that indicates that the evaluator ruled out alternative explanations for academic problems, how the diagnosis of a LD was established, the limitations to learning presented by the LD, and what accommodations are needed and why.



DOCUMENTATION OF ATTENTION-DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (AD/HD)

These guidelines are in conjunction with Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Documentation Requirements

I. Documentation Must be Current

In most cases, a diagnostic evaluation must have been completed within the last three years. Flexibility in accepting documentation that is more than three years old may be important under certain conditions if the previous assessment is applicable to the current/anticipated setting. However, if documentation is inadequate in scope, does not address current level of functioning and need for accommodations, or there has been a change in medication, reevaluation may be required.

II. Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

Psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other relevantly trained medical doctors are considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose AD/HD, provided they have comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of AD/HD. Use of diagnostic terminology indicating AD/HD by someone whose training and experience are not in these fields is not acceptable.

III. Diagnostic Interview

The following must be included to substantiate a comprehensive report: statement of presenting problem, history of presenting attentional problems, developmental history, family presence of ADHD, relevant medical and medication history, relevant psychosocial history, a thorough academic history, relevant history of prior therapy, and a description of current functional limitations pertaining to an educational setting that are presumably a direct result of problems with attention.

IV. Evidence of Early Impairment:

Because AD/HD is, by definition in the DSM-IV, first exhibited in childhood, and manifests itself in more than one setting, a clinical summary of the individual's presenting attentional symptoms, including evidence of symptoms first exhibited in childhood, and ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning in two or more settings (e.g. home, school) must be included. Evidence of a history of attentional symptoms that has significantly impaired the individual over time should be substantiated through such things as teacher comments, report cards, classroom observations, previous testing, etc.

V. Documentation Necessary to Substantiate AD/HD

A. **Rating Scales:** selected examples are listed below:

- ◆ Connors Teacher/Parent Rating Scale



- ◆ Beck Anxiety Inventory
- ◆ Brown Attention-Activation Disorder Scale
- ◆ Wender Utah Rating Scale
- ◆ SNAP-IV
- ◆ Hamilton's Depression Scale

- B. **Neuropsychological and Psychoeducational Testing:** Although no single test or subtest should be used as the sole basis for a diagnostic decision, cognitive and achievement profiles may suggest attention or information processing deficits (see acceptable tests in LD section). Also, as LD's and AD/HD are at times co-morbid, psychoeducational testing may be necessary.
- C. **Medical Evaluation:** Some medical disorders may cause symptomology similar to AD/HD. It may be important to rule out the following: Seizure Disorder, Neuroendocrine and other neurologic disorders. Also the impact of medication tried should be discussed.
- D. **Other Tests That May be Helpful:** these tests are not mandatory, but may assist in diagnosis:
- ◆ Continuous Performance Test (CPT)
 - ◆ Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA)
 - ◆ Classroom Observation

Special note: Test scores/ subtest scores alone should not be used as a sole measure for the diagnostic decision regarding ADHD. Selected subtest score from aptitude tests, memory functions tests, attention or tracking tests, or continuous performance tests do not in and of themselves establish the presence or absence of ADHD. Checklists can serve to supplement the diagnostic profile, but do not substitute for clinical observations and diagnostic judgment (Educational Testing Services, 2000).

VI. Documentation Must Include a Specific Diagnosis

The **specific type** of AD/HD the student has, in accordance with DSM-IV, must be included in the testing report. The diagnostician is encouraged to use direct language in the diagnosis and documentation of a LD, avoiding use of such terms as "suggests" or "is indicative of" (Educational Testing Services, 2000).



DOCUMENTATION OF PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

These guidelines are in conjunction with the Educational Testing Services (ETS).

Terms (ETS, 1999)

Psychiatric Disabilities: A range of conditions characterized by emotional, cognitive, and/or behavioral dysfunction. Diagnoses are provided in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) or the International Classification of Diseases Manual, Tenth Edition (ICD-10). Note that not all conditions listed in the DSM-IV are disabilities, and therefore a diagnosis of a disability does not, in and of itself, meet the definition of a disability necessitating reasonable accommodations.

Major Life Activity: Examples include walking, sitting, speaking, and other similar activities. Individuals with psychiatric disabilities may also experience thinking/psychotic disorders that may interfere with the test-taking situation.

Documentation Requirements

I. Documentation must be Current

As psychiatric disabilities have a changing nature, and accommodations are based on the current impact of the disability, the diagnostic report must be no less than six months old. If it is, the individual must submit a letter from a qualified professional that provides an update of the diagnosis, a description of the current level of functioning during the preceding six months, and a rationale for the requested accommodations.

II. A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

Qualified professionals include clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, trained medical doctors, licensed social workers/counselors, and psychiatric nurse practitioners who have 1) comprehensive training and expertise in differential diagnosis of psychiatric disorders and 2) appropriate licensure/certification.

III. Documentation Must be Comprehensive

The diagnostic report should include the following:

- A. a specific diagnosis according to the DSM-IV, avoiding such language as “suggests,” “has problems with,” or “may have emotional problems.”
- B. history of presenting symptoms, including duration and severity of the disorder
- C. relevant developmental, historical and medical history
- D. a description of the current functional limitation in the academic environments
- E. relevant information regarding medications expected to be in use during academic settings and the impact on the individuals during this setting



- F. relevant information regarding current treatment
- G. specific request for accommodations with accompanying rationales
- H. how alternative diagnoses or explanations were ruled out (i.e. neurological conditions, substance abuse, cross-cultural factors, etc. that may mimic a psychiatric disability).

IV. Assessing Adolescents with Psychological Disorders (may be used to supplement the clinical interview)

A. Rating Scales (selected examples)

- ◆ Beck Depression Inventory
- ◆ Brief Psychiatric Rating Scale
- ◆ Burns Anxiety/Depression Inventory
- ◆ Children’s Depression Inventory
- ◆ Hamilton Anxiety/Depression Rating Scale
- ◆ Multidimensional anxiety Scale for Children

B. Personality Tests

- ◆ Millon Adolescent Personality Inventory (MAPI)
- ◆ Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI-A or MMPI-2)
- ◆ Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire
- ◆ Thematic Apperception Test (TAT or CAT)
- ◆ Rorschach Inkblot Test (scored by Comprehensive System)
- ◆ Kinetic Family Drawing/ House-Tree-Person Drawing

V. Multiple Diagnoses

When accommodations are requested based on multiple diagnoses (e.g. Clinical Depression and Dyslexia), documentation of the other disability should also be included which adhere to the ETS guidelines.

SPECIAL NOTES

- A. SAT/ACT Testing:** Please note that to qualify for accommodations for the ACT/SAT tests, testing must be current within three years. See www.ets.org for testing guidelines, and for exceptions. This may be taken into account when testing a student in high school. For example, if a student is tested as a freshman or late in their eighth grade year, they may need to be tested again in their junior or senior year to qualify for accommodations on the ACT/SAT.



- B. **Testing Required for Accommodation in College:** Please note that many colleges require that testing be done with **adult** tests in order to receive accommodations or for entrance into a learning disability program.

